Australian Bureau of Statistics

2001 Census data processing: Facts and figures, Jun 2002

MEDIA RELEASE

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It took just 10 months to process the 8.6 million forms from Australia's 2001 Census and to return the first results to the community. The following points provide an insight into how this feat was achieved:

- After Census Night (August 7, 2001) census collectors picked up the completed census forms. The forms were consolidated into136 shipping containers, each 20-foot long, and delivered to the Census Data Processing Centre in Sydney from all parts of Australia, including Australian Territories like Antarctica and Christmas Island.
- Delivery of forms to the processing centre began in August 2001 and ended in November 2001.
- 920 computers were used to process the 59.3 million sheets of paper.
- Over 117 million pages were processed through computer software systems, including the Intelligent Character Recognition Software.
- 1.5km of optic fibre cabling and 52.5 km of CAT5 communications cable was used to link the processing technology.
- 12 Kodak 9520 scanners, and 3 Kodak 2500 scanners were used to process the forms.
- It took only a few seconds to scan each page. The most pages scanned in one day was 1.02 million.
- The Census Data Processing Centre employed 850 temporary staff. They ranged in age from 16 to 71 years, and between them had 68 different countries of birth.

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